

## Aboard The Chilton Grange

Crew of a Water-Logged Ship Mutinies in Mid-Ocean

By RALPH D. PAINE

A woman waited patiently in a long, long aisle of desks at which spruce clerks were busied with bills of lading, manifests, and accounts. Through the nearest window she saw the crowded waterfront of Liverpool and the jostling traffic of the Mersey. She was waiting in the hope of a brief interview with Sir James Babb Norcross. Handsome she was even when anxiety had made her haggard.

Sir James had many other matters far more important to occupy this valuable morning. His secretary explained this to the woman, but her persistence was unshaken.

At length the great man was informed that the wife of one of his shipmasters could not be got rid of. She was very quiet and decent about it. Perhaps a word or two would satisfy her. Sympathy for femininity in distress throbbled beneath the white waistcoat of Sir James Babb Norcross. Caressing his neat gray whiskers, he blandly told the secretary:

"You may admit her. I can spare five minutes. Her husband commands one of my vessels? Ah, what name?"

"The Chilton Grange," she says, sir. The steamer left New York ten days ago."

Sir James pursed his lips, and something like a scowl shadowed his massive features. The annoyance was momentary, however, and his mellow geniality reasserted itself as he said:

"The Chilton Grange? Let me see. That would be Captain Nelson Sackett. A capable master but inclined to borrow trouble."

He remained seated as the woman entered, hesitant, abashed, her cheek brightly flushed. It was an immensely audacious enterprise for her to thrust herself upon the notice of Sir James Babb Norcross. In her hand was a letter, folded and concealed, which she did not expect to disclose; but it gave her courage, and was the reason she had waited so patiently.

The ship owner graciously indicated a chair, but she preferred to stand. The sight of him somehow braced her resolution. Her shapely figure was held erect, the poise of her head was challenging, and her breath no longer fluttered between parted lips.

"Mrs. Sackett? I have not had the pleasure of meeting you, although your husband has been for many years in my employ," sonorously declaimed Sir James Norcross.

"I am Judith Sackett," she answered, regarding him from beneath black, level brows.

Her voice trembled a little, but she controlled it as she went on to say:

"I must ask your pardon for putting you to the trouble of seeing me, but I am beside myself with worry, and your clerks could give me no proper information—at least it wasn't sufficient to make my mind easy—"

Sir James stirred in his chair with an air of disquietude and found himself avoiding the gaze of Judith Sackett. He lumbered to his feet as he exclaimed:

"You are agitated, my dear woman. I beg of you to be seated. I am wholly at your service."

As though she heard him not, Judith Sackett nervously twisted the letter in her fingers and moved to a window where she leaned against the ledge. Toward the beefy, pompous shipping magnate she felt a vague sense of physical repulsion. She wished him to keep his distance.

"I came to ask if the Chilton Grange had been reported since she sailed from New York," the woman explained. "They told me in the other room that she had not been spoken."

"Which was quite correct, Mrs. Sackett," pleasantly replied Sir James. "But there is not the slightest ground for alarm. Our smaller ships of the Chilton Grange class are not yet equipped with wireless. It sometimes happens that the steamer makes the Atlantic without being once spoken. The Chilton Grange has been at sea only ten days. I am surprised that you should feel at all concerned about her."

"I am always anxious when my husband is afloat," said Judith Sackett. "It is the cross that we wives of seafaring men must bear. What I wish to beg of you is that you will surely send word to my house whenever the steamer is heard from. If I leave it to a clerk, he may forget or delay it. If you command it, I can depend upon getting the news. It will be the greatest

favor in the world to me and my little boy."

Sir James coughed, fumbled with the papers on his desk, and demanded:

"What is there about this particular voyage to make you feel alarmed? A summer passage in a stanch, well-fitted steamer with an experienced master—why, I should not mind being along myself!"

"I have had bad dreams, dreadful dreams," she evasively returned. "A woman weaves strange fancies when her man is far away. I am not the hysterical sort, but I feel things, and they come true. You will promise to let me know? I have been tracing the voyage with a pencil on an old chart, setting down every day an average run for the Chilton Grange. She must be in mid-ocean by now. Ships should be passing her on the eastbound track. Is it foolish to ask them to look for her?"

At last her restless mood seemed to have communicated itself to the portly Sir James. He flung out his arm in a jerky, emphatic gesture as he affirmed:

"But, my dear Mrs. Sackett, the vessel is not overdue. She is jogging along at eight or nine knots, with a voyage of three thousand miles to make. And I have the greatest confidence in your husband. I shall be glad, however, to comply with your request. The office has your address. I am at a loss to understand your fears. If they did not cause you so much real distress, I should be inclined to laugh at them, upon my word! Captain Sackett is as safe in the Chilton Grange as though he were on dry land. Have you been having any trouble with your nerves that might account for this?"

Judith Sackett was no longer able to dissemble her contempt. It blazed in her dark eyes and curled her red lips. Until now she had watchfully held her speech under restraint lest she might jeopardize her husband's interests with his employer. But the monstrous hypocrisy of Sir James Babb Norcross made her throw discretion to the winds.

He was crassly lying to her, and she knew it.

Smoothing out the crumpled letter in her hand, she moved closer to the desk.

"And so you would not mind being along with Captain Sackett for this voyage in the Chilton Grange?" she cried, mocking and tempestuous. "It will go hard with him, no doubt, if he comes through safe, after I tell you the truth to your face. But can I listen to the cruel nonsense of an owner who holds sailors' lives and sailors' widows so cheap?"

Sir James looked amazed, his florid features became mottled with righteous indignation. He was about to ring for his secretary and have the woman removed, but she confronted him, beautiful and fearless.

Judith Sackett read aloud the message from Captain Nelson Sackett as he had written it to her in his cabin just before sailing from New York:

"I expected to stay here longer for repairs in dry dock, but Sir James Babb Norcross tells me by cable to proceed at once. I mailed a report to him as soon as we came in from Rio. The vessel has strained herself forward, and we had to keep the pumps going. There is eight feet of water in the forepeak now, and we can't seem to gain on it much. The reason why the owner orders me to wait and go into dry dock in Liverpool is that the job will cost him four or five hundred pounds less than if I had it done in New York. With fair weather the Chilton Grange will be able to make the passage, although it will be slow—and you must not worry."

"The owner takes no risk on her, for the steamer is well insured, and he is going in for bigger ships which are more profitable to run. I might ask Lloyd's agent in New York what he thought of starting across the western ocean with eight feet of water in the forepeak and the pumps unable to clear it. He would order the vessel into dry dock or cancel the insurance, but I can't afford to do it. Sir James Babb Norcross would give me the sack and blacklist me in English ports. A shipmaster has to take things as he finds them these days."

Judith Sackett's voice faltered and died. She stood waiting for Sir James to answer the damning indictment. Her words had been like the tolling of a bell. Their intonation conveyed her belief that the Chilton Grange would never see port again, as though her dreams of disaster had been prompted by means more

subtle and mysterious than wireless telegraphy.

At this moment the great man's secretary entered hastily, a packet of letters in his hand.

"The American mail, Sir James," said he. "And you will be delighted, I'm sure, to see the handwriting of Mr. Hayden Norcross again."

"Ah, thank you," was the eager, beaming reply, the woman forgotten. "No doubt my son has written to tell me in what liner he has taken passage for home. A White Star boat, or a Cunarder, I suppose."

The storm had almost blown itself out, and the swollen seas that reared against a leaden horizon were sullenly subsiding. The Chilton Grange rolled as though weary of the battle for survival. Captain Nelson Sackett marked how slow and heavy was her motion, her natural buoyancy well nigh gone. His first mate stood beside him, a man whom life had whipped into uncomplaining fortitude. It was part of the scheme of existence, as he knew it, that mariners should be forced to go in unseaworthy vessels to earn their bread.

"Will she last through another night, sir?" he asked without emotion.

"I doubt it, Mr. Rhoades. When she settles a little lower we will try to get the boats away. I'm hoping something may happen along to pick us off before the poor old hooker founders."

"She never had a fair chance this voyage, sir. Crippled to begin with, and luck went against her."

"Right you are," said Captain Sackett, "and I feel sorry for her."

"Queer—awful queer, isn't it, sir, that the owner's son should have shoved himself aboard the way he did—and then the voyage turn out this way?"

"Strange it is, Mr. Rhoades, and perhaps not so strange. You and I believe in the judgments of God. They can overtake a man as powerful as Sir James Babb Norcross."

Hayden Norcross had climbed to the bridge and approached them unobserved. He heard the voice of Captain Sackett, solemn and devout, deliver this condemnation as one who knew whereof he spoke. White and shaking, but not with fear, the young man stepped between the two officers and cried:

"Why have you been hiding things from me ever since we left New York? What is the trouble with this ship? Is she haunted? What's this nonsense about my father and the judgments of God?"

The mate sighed and went forward, methodical, unhurried, as always. Captain Sackett laid his hand upon Hayden's shoulder as he said:

"The Chilton Grange is dropping from under our feet. I have tried to keep the truth from you because I could not rally hold you responsible. But now you ought to know. If you come out this alive, I want you to remember for the sake of other sailors."

"Remember what?" exclaimed Hayden Norcross, discerning that in this extremity there was no room for anything except the truth, naked and brutal.

"That your father sent this steamer to sea when he had the facts to prove she wasn't fit to go. He did it to save no more money than you fling away in a month. And jolly little he cared if we poor devils never saw Liverpool!"

"It's a lie! It must be a lie!" shouted young Norcross, but his voice faltered. "You are trying to cover up your own neglect. You have listened to the silly ravings of the crew. My God, to say such a thing as that about my father!"

From his salt-stained blue coat the shipmaster pulled out a copy of the report he had mailed to Sir James Babb Norcross and the cabled reply. Without anger he gave them to the son. The evidence required, no comment. It was final, complete.

When Hayden Norcross had read it, slowly, unflinchingly, he forgot that death was so near. The expression of his face was no longer boyish.

"No wonder the men were cursing me!" he said after an abstracted silence.

"I am eating my own conscience before the ship goes under," quoth Captain Sackett. "I failed to warn you. Can you forgive me for that? It seemed like a decess that I had no right to meddle with."

"I can't hold it against you, of course," was the manly assurance. "You could have done nothing else. How long can we stay afloat? There are the boats, you know."

"Yes, there are the boats, Mr. Norcross, but only one is worth launching overside. The others are old and rotten. The pain hold them together."

Hayden winced and turned away. The captain resumed his last watch on the bridge of the Chilton Grange.

The day wore on into a misty afternoon, which curtailed the wallowing freighter from the sight of other steamers. The men were deserting their post. The fires had been extinguished, and the pumps no longer throbbed. Armed and indomitable, Captain Sackett drove the seamen and stokers away from the one seaworthy boat.

Suddenly there raged in the more ruffianly of the crew the resolve to leave young Norcross behind to drown. Shoving Norcross into a room, Captain Sackett whirled to face the onset. They swarmed about him like wolves.

His warning shout failed to check them. With a feeling of pity, he shot the leader, and the mob broke.

Obedience and disciplined to the last, Rhoades and the second mate hauled Norcross toward the boat, unheeding his frantic protests. The mob rallied and streamed after them. Captain Sackett raced on ahead, and stood with his back to the boat, striving to repel the rush as the ship began to sink.

In the mournful obscurity of the mist there suddenly loomed the shape of a huge liner, eastward bound, which slackened way and began to drop her rescuing boats with magical celerity. The crew of the sinking tramp leaped into the sea before the suction could drag them down. Captain Sackett flung his passenger overboard and dived as his forlorn ship lunged and rolled in the closing moment of the tragedy. They fought clear of her, and were fished out by the seamen of the liner, an officer explaining:

"We had special orders by wireless to look out for you. A close shave, that."

"The shipping magnate was afraid to meet his only son, and his natural joy was profoundly shadowed. Hayden shook hands, but his mood was taciturn, and he was more like a stranger until they had quitted the crowd. Then he said, grave, inflexible:

"I have sailed with a man, father, a better man than you. He kept his crew from killing me. It was for the sake of other sailors. You can take your choice. I step into the business and change its methods—do you understand that?—or we part."

Sir James turned to gaze at Judith Sackett and her man and their

## TANLAC HAS BEEN WORTH \$500 TO HIM HE SAYS

Richardson Declares "Two Years Have Passed Since Tanlac Restored My Health."

ONCE LIVED ON MILK.

Removed by Tanlac, He Says "I've Had No Return of Any of My Old Troubles."

A few days ago, Frank Richardson, a well known employe of the Byrd Printing Company, residing at 52 West Lake St., Atlanta, came into Jacob's Pharmacy and in relating his experience with Tanlac, said:

"About eighteen months ago, while I lived in Knoxville, Tenn., I made the statement that I wouldn't take \$500 for the good Tanlac did me. Well, I just want to tell you I still feel the same way about it. I suffered with the most terrible case of stomach trouble, which had followed me for seven long years and pulled me down almost to the point of despair. Tanlac gave me relief when everything else had failed and I can never forget it."

"My diet was restricted to milk and occasionally a soft boiled egg, and I wouldn't dare touch meats of any kind. I was habitually constipated and externally nervous. No matter what I would eat, I would always have an awful pain in my stomach and this, with my stomach, kept me awake for hours every night. My condition alarmed my wife and I was almost at the turn of the road where I hadn't strength to

only son as they passed from the harbor. Brokenly he muttered:

"I may have made mistakes, Hayden. If you think you can mend them—why, I need your help. We want no more disasters like the Chilton Grange. I—I too have suffered. Will you come home with me?"

"On those terms I will go home with you," was the verdict of the new head of the house of Norcross. (The End.)

follow my vocation.

"I read about Tanlac helping so many people who were afflicted as I was, and determined to try it. I started to the drug store one evening for my first bottle, and I was so weak from loss of strength and energy that I fainted. I managed to get back home after so long and started on my Tanlac, and the first few doses made me feel better. I continued improving, and, after taking the fourth bottle, there was a most wonderful change in my condition. I found that I could eat just anything I wanted, and, for the first time in years, I could eat boiled ham and potatoes and felt no ill after-effects. The pains all left my stomach, my nervousness disappeared and I could sleep like a child. My troubles all went away with those few bottles of Tanlac and left me stronger and more energetic than I had been in years. Yes, sir, eighteen months have passed since Tanlac so wonderfully restored my health, and it gives me pleasure to tell you that I have no return of any of my old troubles to this good day, and I have kept my average weight all along. Tanlac made life a real pleasure to me, and I go about my work with a feeling that reminds me of the days of my young manhood."

Tanlac, the master medicine, is sold exclusively by J. F. Mackey, Lancaster; Peoples Drug & Grocery Co., Heath Springs; C. O. Floyd, Kershaw.—Adv.

## ATLANTA CARS RUNNING.

Atlanta, Ga., Oct. 3.—Local and suburban street cars, which were sent to their barns Sunday and again Monday night, because of alleged danger from sympathizers with striking motormen and conductors, were operated tonight and it was announced that service would be continued on reduced schedules until the usual hours of stopping for the night.

## Whenever You Need a General Tonic Take Grove's

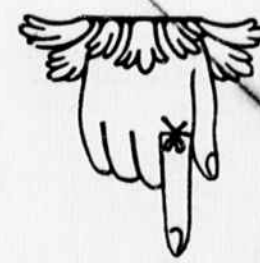
The Old Standard Grove's Tasteless chill Tonic is equally valuable as a General Tonic because it contains the well known tonic properties of QUININE and IRON. It acts on the Liver, Drives out Malaria, Enriches the Blood and Builds up the Whole System. 50 cents.

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